

Ward 2

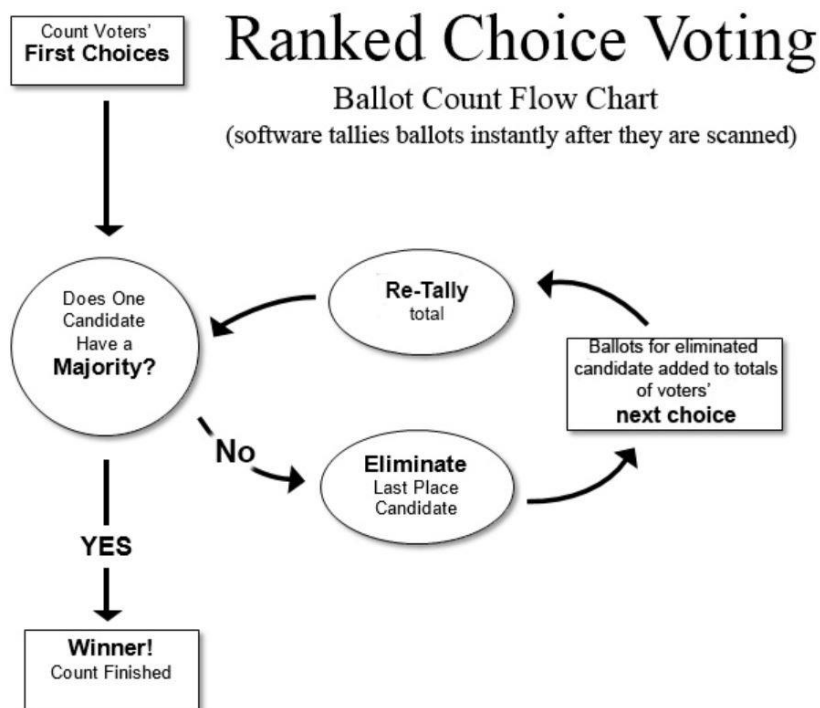
Councillor Lisa Kearns

My Comments

Ranked Ballots

In administering Municipal elections, several key aspects of the election administration should be considered, including: Communication and Voter Engagement, Voters' List, Election Signs, Voting Locations, Accessibility, Voting System/ Service Provider, and Ranked Choice Voting.

One of the things that is worthwhile looking at is the general nature of municipal elections as low-information elections. What does ranked balloting do in terms of enhancing the information that is available to voters? One could argue that the focus and significance of second and third choices means candidates are more likely to share information about other candidates that they feel allied to – the idea of a slate giving cues to voters as to who they should vote for.



In London, Ontario, the first municipality to utilize ranked ballots identified that the averaged turnout over the last 8 elections cites a turnout of 40.2%, so the 2018 turnout of 39.46% is well within the range of standard deviation. This decline is not anomalous. In pointing to the 2014 election which presented motivation for voters because there was a perception of a concerted slate of younger candidates and a sense of trying to refresh council from the incumbent administration. This debunks any inference that ranked ballots directly decreased voter turnout.

It is important work that is upcoming by the clerk; on the assessment of the costs, procedures and technical requirements of putting on the 2018 ranked ballot election. It will be up to Council to assess the democratic consequences. Stay tuned.

October 2020
